

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 28

Relating to the naming of the George Washington Carver State
Office Building.

WHEREAS, George Washington Carver was born into slavery near Diamond Grove, Missouri, sometime between July 1861 and January 1864. He was a sickly baby, soon orphaned when his mother was abducted by slave traders, and whose very survival beyond infancy defied the understanding and capabilities of the medical community at that time; and

WHEREAS, even absent a formal education, George Washington Carver's intellect and affinity for agriculture manifested themselves at an early age; and

WHEREAS, at the age of 11, George Washington Carver informed his caretakers that he was going to move to Neosho so he could attend the school for African-American children and that he would find a place where he could work in exchange for his board. He soon traveled to Neosho, alone, with nothing but the best of his rock collection, a clean shirt in a bundle slung over his shoulder, and a package of food under his arm; and

WHEREAS, by the end of 1876, George Washington Carver had learned everything the teacher at the school knew and everything in the books available to the school, and the teacher gave him a certificate of merit attesting to such fact; and

WHEREAS, George Washington Carver continued his education at various institutions in Kansas and Iowa, all the while taking whatever jobs allowed him to earn the money needed to continue his education, inspiring one professor to proclaim, "George Carver has come to us with a satchel full of poverty and a burning zeal to know everything"; and

WHEREAS, in 1896 Booker T. Washington pleaded with George Washington Carver to bring his intellect to Tuskegee Institute, which was founded by Washington to provide a college education for African-Americans. Booker T. Washington had come to realize that, since 85 percent of southern African-Americans were farmers, Tuskegee's greatest need was an agriculture department. George accepted, knowing that the work would be hard and the financial reward minimal; and

WHEREAS, George Washington Carver stressed to Tuskegee's students and the region's farmers that soil conservation through diversification of crops and crop rotation was the key to reviving soil that had become unproductive due to the long-term cultivation of cotton; and

WHEREAS, George Washington Carver advocated the use of legumes to replace minerals depleted from the soil by cotton crops. He advised, "Plant peanuts. That'll keep the soil productive. And the boll weevils don't attack peanuts"; and

WHEREAS, solving the problem with unproductive soil resulted in an abundant peanut crop, which could not be marketed profitably and for which there was very little use or demand. George Washington Carver soon set about discovering nearly 300 valuable uses to which the peanut could be put. During his lifetime, peanut crops developed an annual value of \$200 million; and

WHEREAS, George Washington Carver went on to develop various paint, dyes, and medicinal treatments from peanuts, sweet potatoes, and soybeans. He even developed a synthetic rubber for Henry Ford derived from goldenrod; and

WHEREAS, George Washington Carver steadfastly refused to accept an increase in his \$125 a month salary at Tuskegee or offers of more lucrative positions, including one from Thomas Edison that reportedly paid \$100,000 a year. He also declined to patent most of his discoveries, believing that his intellect and industry were gifts

from God that should be shared freely; and

WHEREAS, on July 14, 1943, a mere six months after his death, George Washington Carver's birthplace near Diamond Grove was designated as a national monument; and

WHEREAS, George Washington Carver popularized agricultural extension programs at American universities; can be acknowledged as the father of modern plant science; and is recognized as one of the greatest scientific minds in American history; and

WHEREAS, George Washington Carver overcame enormous prejudice and poverty in his struggle from being identified merely as "Carver's George" to becoming the world renowned George Washington Carver, B.S., M.S., D.Sc., Ph.D., Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, London, and Director of Research and Experiment at Tuskegee Institute, Alabama; and

WHEREAS, George Washington Carver accomplished all of his many great deeds without a trace of bitterness, with total indifference to personal fortune, and thought only to make the world, America in particular, a better place for all mankind; and

WHEREAS, George Washington Carver, in his modesty, once stated, "I am no great person. I am no great scientist. I have only been able to point the way in a few things. After me will come those who read and interpret the signs, the great of the world. I am only the trailblazer.":

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the members of the Missouri Senate, Ninety-Third General Assembly, Second Regular Session, the House of Representatives concurring therein, hereby designate that the state office building located at 1616 Missouri Boulevard, Jefferson City, Missouri, shall hereinafter be known as the "George Washington Carver State Office Building"; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Missouri Senate be instructed to prepare properly inscribed copies of this resolution for the Governor for his approval or rejection pursuant to the Missouri Constitution, and if approved, notify the Director of the Missouri Department of Agriculture.

Copy